

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

NO. LTC # 259-2013

RECEIVED LETTER TO COMMISSION 2013 JUL 30 AM H: 03

TO:

Mayor Matti Herrera Bower and Members of the City Commission ERK'S OFFICE

FROM:

Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager

DATE:

July 25, 2013

SUBJECT: MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND 2013 MAJOR EVENT PLAN AFTER ACTION

This memorandum is intended to provide a report regarding the City's Major Event Plan (MEP) for Memorial Day Weekend 2013. As you know, the Memorial Day Weekend MEP covers the period from Thursday, May 23, 2013 through Tuesday, May 28, 2013. The objective of the MEP was to address anticipated impacts expected during the holiday weekend, mitigate those impacts on the community and, above all, ensure the safety and welfare of residents and visitors. The MEP sets forth the action plan involved from a preparation and implementation perspective, identifies resources, and each Department's role and function during the period.

As is typical with our MEP's, City staff has de-briefed and will continue to do so as needed to review the weekend, discuss outcomes and identify any areas for possible improvement in future years. By all accounts, the holiday weekend was very successful due in large part to the comprehensive planning efforts of the City that began immediately following the 2011 Memorial Day Weekend. As previously reported, the Fire Department, Parking Department, Police Department, Public Works Department Sanitation Division, and Code Compliance Division all enhanced staffing levels in order to manage crowds, maintain safety and ensure quality of life standards throughout the weekend. Our Tourism and Cultural Development Staff and Parks Department staff also provided additional support, while members of my Senior Management Staff work on alpha/bravo shifts all weekend to ensure that the MEP plan was implemented as developed, and to respond to any issues. Additionally, the City received in-kind support from Miami-Dade County, as well as other local jurisdictions, including the presence of volunteer "Goodwill Ambassadors" from both the County and the City, and citizen "God Squad" volunteers. We also worked with other community partners to provide outreach and information. including local radio stations. This year we again met with representatives from the ACLU, NAACP Miami Chapter and the United States Department of Justice/Civil Rights Division prior to the weekend. These groups were also present during the weekend, as they have been for the past few years.

Hotels reported average occupancies at approximately seventy-one percent (71%), as reported by Smith Travel. Although crowds were large during peak periods, more specifically Friday and Saturday evenings, they were generally smaller crowds compared to previous years. In 2012, hotels reported average occupancies at approximately seventy-two percent (72%).

The following is a summary of key elements of our MEP and our review of the plan.

### Traffic Loop:

A cruising loop was implemented to route traffic through and out of the City, while reducing impacts to residential neighborhoods. The following summarizes the cruising loop:

- Ocean Drive was closed to vehicles from Friday, May 24 Tuesday, May 28.
- Collins Avenue from 5<sup>th</sup> Street to Espanola Way one-way heading north from Friday, May 24 Tuesday, May 28.
- Washington Avenue from 5<sup>th</sup> Street 15<sup>th</sup> Street one-way heading south each evening beginning at 7:00pm from Friday, May 24 -Tuesday, May 28; the southbound lanes will be eastern most lanes of travel.

- Roadblocks were erected on most of the cross streets off Fifth, Ocean, Collins and Washington.
- Additional restrictions were in place on Alton Road (5<sup>th</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> Street), Dade Blvd and along 41<sup>st</sup>
  Street to prevent visitors from entering the residential areas.
- Residents were encouraged to use the Venetian Causeway
- As previously stated, the Police Department had a DUI checkpoint from 8 p.m. Friday to 6 a.m. Saturday on the MacArthur Causeway, east of the entrances to Palm and Hibiscus islands.
- License plate readers were deployed on the MacArthur Causeway and other areas of the City to record tags and to find outstanding warrants, cars reported stolen, expired registrations and other potential violations.

**AFTER ACTION:** By all accounts the traffic loop successfully reduced the volume and number of vehicles in the entertainment district and also reduced the impacts of traffic on the adjacent residential neighborhoods.

<u>Pedestrian Sidewalk Expansion:</u> The Collins Avenue sidewalk expansion once again was implemented to provide the increased number of pedestrians with a safe path of travel. Parking along Collins Avenue from 7<sup>th</sup> to Espanola Way was eliminated with barricades providing protection between pedestrians and vehicles to accommodate wider pedestrian paths. Barricades on Collins Avenue from 15<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> streets were also placed adjacent to the sidewalk to prevent jaywalking. The City also closed Ocean Drive from 5<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> streets starting Friday, May 24<sup>th</sup> to address pedestrian overflow in this area of the entertainment district similar to what was done in 2012. Traffic posts were established at all cross streets (100 blocks), manned by Security Guards.

AFTER ACTION: The pedestrian sidewalk expansion proved to be successful once again.

<u>Enhanced Lighting</u>: Many areas along Lummus Park and the beachwalk are generally dimly lit due to environmental regulations pertaining to turtle nesting. Historically, the City has placed light towers placed in Lummus Park south of 10<sup>th</sup> Street during Memorial Day Weekend. In 2012, the City placed 50 light towers throughout the area and in 2013 this was expanded to a total of 60 light towers in the following locations in an effort to make these areas safer for visitors and residents:

- o Lummus Park from 5<sup>th</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> streets
- East of Lummus Park between the Coral Rock Wall and Dune from 5<sup>th</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> streets
- o 21st Street east of the Coral Rock Wall
- Collins Park (east and west sides)
- o Street ends along the Beachwalk from 15<sup>th</sup> street 21<sup>st</sup> street.

**AFTER ACTION:** Enhanced lighting created a safer environment for visitors and resident and proved to be an essential tool in the MEP.

<u>Sky Watch Towers:</u> A total of four (4) towers were deployed this year with capacity for additional lighting and video monitoring. The towers were deployed on Ocean Drive (2); Collins and 16<sup>th</sup> street; and Lincoln Road at Washington Avenue.

AFTER ACTION: The sky watch towers were very useful in monitoring crowd conditions.

<u>Event Staff:</u> A total of 75 Event Staff were deployed nightly starting Friday, May 24<sup>th</sup>. The Event Staff served as a force multiplier to assist with crowd control in heavily traffic areas and at key locations such as popular bars and nightclubs.

**AFTER ACTION:** The level of training and expertise provided by the event staff was very effective in securing residential areas and providing crowd control assistance at key locations.

<u>Safety checkpoints on the MacArthur Causeway</u>: The traffic management plan included certain lane reductions to assist in managing flow of traffic into the city.

- <u>DUI checkpoint:</u> Police from the City of Miami and Miami Beach staged a DUI checkpoint from 8 p.m. Friday to 6 a.m. Saturday on the MacArthur Causeway, east of the entrances to Palm and Hibiscus islands.
- <u>License Plate recognition</u>: License plate readers that use multi-angle scanners to record vehicle tags were placed along the Julia Tuttle and MacArthur causeways to record almost every car that drives into South Beach. The Police Department used four (4) readers (2 stationary, 2 mobile).

<u>DUI Saturation</u>: MBPD had a dedicated squad of DUI officers conducting saturation details all five (5) days in Area I (South Beach).

**AFTER ACTION:** The DUI checkpoint was held on Friday, May 24<sup>th</sup>: A total of 1,108 vehicles were checked, which resulted in 280 traffic citations, 26 arrests, 3 DUI arrests, 4 guns seized, and 13 vehicles were towed. These numbers are generally consistent with typical checkpoints. In 2012, a total of 1260 vehicles were checked, 21 arrests, 6 DUI arrests, 3 additional arrests by ATF for firearms, 4 guns seized, 257 citations issued and 12 vehicles were towed.

The License Plate Readers proved to also be very useful and resulted in 63,383 license plates run. Of those hits, 811 Citations were issued, 5 felony arrests were made, 3 DUI, 21 misdemeanor arrests and 27 tows. In 2012 by comparison, it resulted in 17,391 license plates run, which generated 425 hits. Of those hits, 198 Citations were issued, 2 felony arrests were made, 1 DUI, 7 misdemeanor arrests, 1 warrant arrest and 11 tows.

### Public Safety

The Police Department, in concert with personnel from Miami-Dade County, City of Miami, as well as other jurisdictions and law enforcement agencies, provided a visible street presence throughout the weekend. There were 382 Miami Beach Police Officers and another 150 officers from outside agencies, for a total of 532 police personnel throughout the weekend. Additionally, the City used 75 event staff each night during the weekend. In 2012 by comparison, there were 361 Miami Beach Police Officers and another 155 officers from outside agencies, for a total of 516 police personnel throughout the weekend.

Efforts to provide information and early outreach on the City's various laws and codes assisted in reducing the number of incidents resulting in arrests. In summary, a total of 414 arrests were made and 1,054 traffic citations were issued (1for loud music), with the majority (84%) of all arrests made for misdemeanors (319) (as has been the case each year). Local residents representing 43% of the total arrested ("local" residents include 46 from Miami Beach and 132 from Miami-Dade County). Another 24% percent of those arrested were from other areas of Florida (100); out of state (98); foreign residents (3); and 35 individuals with unknown addresses. By comparison, in 2012, 373 arrests were made and 1,083 traffic citations (2 for loud music) were issued.

Calls for service were slightly down this year with a total of 2,460 (2,107 Police and 353 Fire). In 2011, the total number of calls for service were 2,548 (2,166 Police and 382 Fire).

Once again, the City successfully implemented the Goodwill Ambassador Program for the weekend. This included the volunteer participation of approximately 50 City of Miami Beach employees; 232 Miami Dade County employees; and 30 of members of the God Squad. These volunteers provided much assistance to our Police Department by monitoring areas where large groups were concentrated, and providing information to our visitors.

# Memorial Day Weekend 2013 Recap Page 4 of 4

Our Fire Department reported no significant and experienced an easier ability to circulate around the entertainment district in response to calls for service.

The City also located the Unified Command Post at the Convention Center to better coordinate City responses in a more rapid and efficient manner. The Command Post had representatives from most departments 24 hours a day throughout the weekend. This proved to be very successful.

## Parking & Code Enforcement; Sanitation

The Parking Department's enhanced staffing provided increased enforcement and staffing of parking. A total of 3,287 citations were issued, and 430 public property tows were requested. Parking dispatch handled 231 complaint calls throughout the weekend.

The Code Compliance Division's enhanced staffing provided Bike and Foot Patrols, in addition to responding for regular calls for service. The Bike and Foot patrols focused their efforts within Ocean Drive, Lincoln Road, as well as the Washington and Collins Avenue corridors. During the four day period Code Compliance staff addressed 350 cases, broken down as follows:

- o Noise Cases: 65
- o Canceled by Complainant: 9
- o Total Valid:
- 22
- Overall Validity Rate: 39.3%

### Sidewalk Café Violations

- There were 24 Notice of Violations (NOVs) issued to Sidewalk Cafes during the 4 day period
- 8 NOVs issued for Solicitation
- 6 NOVs for peddling
- o 10 NOVs issued for Illegal Signs within the public right of way

Actual expenses for the enhanced staffing and operational support for Memorial Day Weekend are estimated at \$1,600,000. Once actual expenses are confirmed the Mayor and City Commission will be provided that information.

C: Kathie G. Brooks, Assistant City Manager Joe Jimenez, Assistant City Manager Mark Taxis, Assistant City Manager

#### JMG/HMF/mas

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